Darkness and Death

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by Ghostwriter98

Summary

Hannibal Lecter doesn’t know his exact age. He doesn’t understand the ways of humans nor can he remember the original name his parents had gifted him but he knows with the certainty that there are antlers on his head and blood under his skin that he loves Will Graham - would kill and maim and destroy for him - and Hannibal would be damned if he let some vicious intruding wendigo try and take that all away from him.

Or,
Wendigo Hannibal doesn't realise just how much Will Graham means to him until he's in danger of losing him.

Notes

So, this is set about a year after after Never Cage A Predator. I decided to explore Hannibal's perspective for a change mostly because I wanted to go into more detail about wendigo rituals and behaviour in this universe.

See the end of the work for more notes

There are three things that Hannibal Lecter is absolutely certain of. One, the woods have been, and will always be, his true home. Two, humans may be vicious creatures but the danger of capture or death is worth the taste of their delectable flesh. And three, the most important of all, he can't live without Will Graham.

So no, Hannibal Lecter doesn't know his exact age. He doesn't understand the ways of humans nor can he remember the original name his parents had gifted him but he knows with the certainty that there are antlers on his head and blood under his skin that he loves Will Graham - would kill and maim and *destroy* for him - and Hannibal would be damned if he let some vile intruder try and take that all away from him.

Hannibal tries to keep a clear head. He inhales deeply again, smelling the fresh air but the bitter tang of an unknown male wendigo destroys the sweet scent of honeysuckle and the tantalizing aroma of nearby campers.

Never mind that Hannibal has marked these trees with his scent, spent hours rubbing his cheek against the rough bark and carving symbols into the wood with his claws. Never mind that he has made it abundantly clear that this area is *his* domain. The water that trickles from the creek is for *his* lips, the stone cave weathered from seasons of wind battering is *his* place to sleep and the new fledgling wendigo in his territory is *his* to mentor and lavish with affections. None of this matters to this intruder for he has not only chosen to ignore Hannibal's territory markings but has chosen to blatantly disrespect his claim by flaunting his scent. Will, dear, darling, William, would not understand the enormity of this because he is new to the ways of the wendigos but to enter the territory of an unfamiliar wendigo uninvited and to scent mark a tree is to challenge that wendigo (or wendigos plural in this case) to their right to own that land. A battle of blood and breath will ensue and the victor will win. When two wendigos occupy a territory, a challenging wendigo will often attack his two opponents separately, starting with the weakest. And Will, who has been a wendigo for barely twelve full moons compared to Hannibal's one thousand and twenty something moons, is undoubtedly the weakest.

Hannibal growls with an odd mixture of worry and fury. He stifles the childish urge to ram his antlers against something. He needs to be calm so he can track this rude stranger. Calm, focused and centered.

Hannibal breathes through his mouth, tastes bloodlust and intrigue on his tongue as this intruder has no doubt spotted his Will. Will who is most likely wallowing in the stream. Hannibal knows how splendid Will looks with rivulets of water cascading down his chest. A cheap substitute to times when he bathes in the blood of his enemies but still beautiful nonetheless. This vile intruder would not see any of that though. The wendigo would only see the way Will curls inwardly from the cold, a pesky remaining human sensitivity that makes Will appear smaller and more vulnerable than he actually is. That and those new antlers, a mere five inches long, peeking fourth from the wet fur on his head. Human fur that is slowly falling free as each step Will takes to embrace his new existence as a wendigo forces him to sacrifice one more bit of his humanity. Those little antlers would be no match for the impressive rack of a fully developed wendigo and said intruder would know it.

Hannibal closes his eyes. Ah, yes. He can smell Will now. The dewy odour of the stream mixing with the scent of fish and pine and faint lingering human. Now, the darker, mustier scent of the intruder and berry bushes. Hannibal was right in his predication of Will's location but now that he's certain there's no time to lose! Hannibal launches himself through the underbrush, silently weaving around trees, fallen decaying logs and a white rabbit that darts across his path. He has one thought on his mind and that is to get to Will before it's too late.

Hannibal hears a whine as he nears the stream, the frequency only a wendigo can utter. His heart stutters in his chest and his step falters. Suddenly, Hannibal is flashing back to many moons ago when little Mischa was dancing with the birds. The snap of a twig was their only warning before strange woven grass (net, Will called it) whizzed by and burned Hannibal's skin where it touched him. He still remembers how Mischa had closed her eyes and turned her cheek, whimpering for his help but Hannibal couldn't move. He was pinned to the ground. All he could do was roar as they dragged her away and he saw her blood where she had lain. He had sworn then and there that he would make them bleed until the world was as red as the anger he felt. He would make those humans whimper and cry and look with such fear and terror as he had seen in her eyes and where they had failed to show her mercy, he too would do the same.

A leaf falls onto Hannibal's face and suddenly the older wendigo is back to the here and now where there is still time to save the one he loves. That whimper is not the last he will hear of Will, he won't let it be!

A growl, guttural and low, rumbles free from Hannibal's chest. He quickly darts into the clearing, just in time to see the vile intruder on his knees, no doubt going for a low swipe at Will's legs. He bows his head to *bite?* – no nudge, nudge an offering of fish before Will. Hannibal pauses, beyond confused before finally realizing what this is. This unknown wendigo is not trying to attack dear Will, perhaps he once did but now his agenda has changed to one of courtship. Hannibal understands how that can happen. He himself had fallen under a similar spell when he first came face to face with Will back when he was still a sweet smelling human. No, Hannibal does not blame this fellow wendigo for falling for the temptation that is Will Graham. What does anger him though is the way that Will has his talons curled softly around the intruder's antlers, reciprocating his affection. It sets Hannibal off like nothing else, making his clawed hands tingle with the desire to tear and rip. To touch a wendigo's antlers is intimate, as intimate as that act Will enjoys where he presses his lips to Hannibal's own and holds himself there for long periods of time. An act meant for mates and family but never strangers. Not that he and Will were mates yet. If they were then this nightmare could have been avoided. A sudden fear fills Hannibal that this is purposeful. That Will wants Hannibal to witness this, to see him choose another after all they have been through together. The older wendigo is reminded of Will once hesitating on the ball of his hooves, eyes flickering back and fourth as he decided whether he ought to set him free from Mason's cage. *Unsure.* Is he unsure now that another wendigo is before him? Another future?

Will meets Hannibal's gaze over the shoulder of his admirer. It's a well rounded shoulder, fairly muscular for their kind, a good shoulder from a healthy, agile, able bodied mate. Will's eyes are blank as they bore into Hannibal's own. A skill that he has learnt from his mentor (if Hannibal can even call himself that anymore). Suddenly, Will's talons tighten and then twist and a crunching, grinding sound fills the silence.

The intruder collapses onto the grass, face as peaceful and serene as it had been moments before. Hannibal trots closer, cocks his ear to the side to see if he can hear the thump of a third heartbeat. *Nothing*. He can hear Will's own. Oh, the younger wendigo is euphoric with his kill. His heart hammering out a fast pace and Hannibal can smell his excitement in the air, electric.

Hannibal finds himself at a loss. He has never seen such an action before. Most wendigos butt it out with their antlers, the first to impale the other winning. Occasionally, they bring their claws and hooves into it and biting is fairly common place when fighting for dominance but *this*….Hannibal has never seen such a clean and bloodless form of execution. If only Will could butcher humans this easily, their lives would be so much easier.

Will glowers at Hannibal with a raised chin. Defiant.

Had this been Will's plan all along? Hannibal can't help but wonder. *To lure this wendigo into a false sense of comfort before taking his life? Is he doing the same to me right now?*

The thought sends a shock of heat through Hannibal. His beautiful, savage Will, forever a terror to those around him. Something of his adoration must have shown on his face because Will bares his teeth in a smile and crawls closer to him, playfully butting their antlers.

"Mate?" Will says in Hannibal's own tongue and a bodily thrill runs through Hannibal. Those words, if only Will could understand how intimate they are, how lovely to be called. This intruder may not have been such a terrible thing after all. Perhaps being propositioned by another had made Will's instincts rebel? Will preferring the wendigo who had taught him to hunt and embrace his nature. The same wendigo who had left him a human sacrifice and carved symbols day and night for his eyes to feast on. Or maybe it was because his body was too used to the scent and touch and sight of Hannibal to let him go so easily. Regardless, Will had come to this decision on his own. Hannibal may have taken his humanity, coerced him to kill so he could feed but he would never force Will into a coupling. A bond could not be built on lies and manipulation but rather clear intentions and trust. Mates were life partners and if Will could sense that he had been deceived into a union with that uncanny ability of his, it would be a spiteful eternity that would await Hannibal.

"Mate?" Will repeats and he's getting impatient now.

"Yes," Hannibal says because it's all he's wanted since he first saw Will. Then a human, trembling before him with darkness and death swirling in his eyes.

End Notes

Oh, Hannibal. You don't need to worry so much. Will isn't a delicate little teacup, remember? He's the mongoose you want under the house when the snakes slither by.

Mating = Sex. Biting is also common but not necessary as the scent changes between the pair should indicate to others that their mated.

The End.

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